The coming of the gold seekers in 1849 gave to Nymphas Murdock his first opportunity to accumulate mules, harnesses, wagons, saddles and other equipment. He traded and kept camp yard, and in this business he acquired his first financial resources. His mother's Yankee traits he inherited naturally, her appetites he acquired, and he was forced to live by the rules of her thrift and economy. No New England Yankee was a better trader, or a better keeper than Nymphas Coridan Murdock. His habits and customs were typically Yankee. I have heard him say many times, "My mother taught me to be moderate in all things." After a good trade or a successful year he celebrated. His celebrations were not always sober. When under the influence of grog, his disposition did not improve. More often he would hunt a fight, and if fighting men were not available, he often disturbed the peaceful serenity of his home and the neighborhood.

Once when he was displeased with his mother's housekeeping and cooking, he told her so with great emphasis. She replied, "If you don't like my housekeeping and cooking, just go and get you a wife. You are old enough and big enough to marry." He immediately put on his bed-tick shirt, store shoes and his best manners and went to call on Sarah Melissa Barney. The visit became a checker game in which Royal Barney, the father of Melissa, was defeated. The victorious Nymphas Murdock challenged Sarah Melissa to play

checkers. The game was never finished. She promised to be his wife on such short acquaintance that he did not dare seal the bargain with a kiss; instead he gave her a Mexican dollar as pledge, which was all the money he possessed. The Mexican dollar bound it for life in the absence of a ring. The courtship was short, but the union was life-long. It began in a wikiup made of willows. Their total equipment was a butcher knife, a frying-pan and an axe. Sally Stacy Murdock became the grand-mother of four beautiful children.

Plural marriage was practiced among the Mormons; in fact, it was considered a commandment of God to the Mormons. Esther Maria Davis, a beautiful Mormon girl, was presented to Nymphas by Sarah Melissa, the first wife, as Sarah presented Hagar to Jacob, as a second wife. Thus began an unharmonious life for Nymphas Coridon Murdock.

To the few who have lived through the unpleasantness of plural marriage, this will need no explanation. Harmony reigned but seldom in the polygamist household, and Nymphas Murdock's household was no exception. Differences, dissatisfactions and turmoil were more often the everyday occurrence. The big adobe house was not big enough for his two wives and his mother. In-laws seldom live harmoniously together.

Louisa Norris, the sister of Ben, came to keep house for the Murdock family and Nymphas and Louisa became engaged. Nymphas one day went to the field,

christened Sarah Louise Norris

failing to leave wood chopped for the fire with which to cook dinner. Louisa* took the axe and chopped his best ox-yoke into stove wood. When Nymphas returned, he was furious and slapped Louisa's face. This ended their engagement. They continued, however, to be friends to the end of their lives.

In one year Sally Stacy Murdock and nine grandchildren died, the children with diphtheria, and Grandmother Murdock from old age. They were all buried in the cemetery in Salt Lake City. Nymphas Coridon Murdock and Sarah Melissa, his first wife, also rest in the same sacred ground.

After the death of great-grandmother Murdock and the nine children, the Salt Lake home was still not large enough. Consequently, Nymphas in 1864 acquired land at Charleston, Utah, where he and one family resided. He later opened a store at Heber City and the first cooperative store in Charleston, Utah.

For many years the family of Nymphas Murdock was divided between the home at Salt Lake City and the ranch at Charleston. Journeys, at irregular intervals, were made to and from these places. These trips were historical. Nymphas carried ranch products to the city and city products to the ranch. On one of these trips he had a wagon-load of merchandise, pitchforks, shovels, picks, etc. Among the etcetera was a barrel of apple cider. His nephew was a companion. The spirited team of bays brought wagon and its contents

*Note Sarah Louise Norris later married Charles Franklin Decker

safely as far as Provo Canyon. Nymphas and his nephew decided a few drinks of cider would improve their bodily condition and make the journey more pleasant. The further up the canyon they drove, the more cider they drank. Nymphas did the driving until his nephew decided that he, not his uncle, was the best teamster. A furious argument arose and, when on the highest, most dangerous dug-way in the canyon, one or the other turned the horses off the narrow road by pulling the wrong line. Horses, wagon, merchandise and Nymphas rolled and tumbled in a mangled heap over the precipice into the bottom of the canyon. The nephew stepped out of the wagon and stayed on the road. When the rescue party came to salvage the wreckage, they found both horses alive and Nymphas with a pitch-fork wound in his side. This danger point in Provo Canyon was named the Murdock Dug-way in commemoration of this historical event, and a lesson to drunken drivers.

Another trip which made history happened when a wagon loaded with family property and household equipment overturned into the swollen stream of high, muddy water in Parley's Canyon. Everything was lost except the oxen and wagon. The second accident was ciderless.

For many years travel between city and ranch continued, but finally the city property was sold for $7,500 and the residence of the Murdock family was permanently established at Charleston, Utah.